HIEROMONK MAXIMOS, MONK BASIL
Skete of St. Basil the Great
Mount Athos

MEMORANDUM-APPEAL

To the Abbots and Superiors of the Twenty Sacred Monasteries of the Holy Mountain of Athos

Translated from the Greek

CENTER FOR TRADITIONALIST
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About the Authors

Hieromonk Maximos is Superior (Δικαῖος) of the famous Skete of St. Basil the Great on Mount Athos, a dependency of the Great Lavra established, according to tradition, by monks from Cappadocia in the Middle Ages. Spiritual son of the pious Hieromonk Gerasimos (†1967), Father Maximos has been a monastic on the Holy Mountain, where he received his spiritual and theological training, for more than fifty-five years. His skete has aligned itself with and commemorates the Synod of Greek Old Calendarist Bishops under Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili.

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I

INTRODUCTION-PROLOGUE

(The Purpose and Goal of the Present Document)

Since, by the good will of the Lord, I am, by rights, a true spiritual member of the Hagiorite Brotherhood, as one who has lived continuously for an entire span of fifty-five years in the desert region of the Holy Mountain, at the "Holy Hesychasterion" of St. Basil—which is a dependency of our Ruling House, the Holy Monastery of the Great Lavra—, living so on the foundation and by the power of the God-pleasing spiritual formation accomplished, in all possible "piety and righteousness," by my most blessed Elder and spiritual Father, the ever-memorable Hieromonk Gerasimos of the Skete of St. Basil (†1967), on whose account, being in fact faithful to his command that I "follow his footsteps," and being possessed of a genuine Hagiorite conscience, I cannot permit myself to be ignorant of, or indifferent and willfully blind or deaf to, the general ecclesiastical confusion and apostasy that have been developing for years now, up to this day, and which are becoming successively worse and are now unfolding in a manner without precedent in the annals of the Church!

On this account, indeed, I must face this situation, with its concomitant destructive and soul-destroying consequences, in a God-befitting and God-pleasing manner, that is, without "the taint of compromise" and servile "protests by capitulation," since in matters purely of "faith and piety," which directly affect the "very being and essential nature" both of ourselves and the Church, there is no room for "condescension" and *oikonomia.*

Hence, impelled by considerable spiritual duty, together with the *Synodeia* and Brotherhood under me, we have in the past made detailed reference to this situation in writing. See (1) *Confession-Appeal* (Holy Mountain: "Agioreiton Pateron" Editions, 1979); (2) *Apostasy and Division,* (Athens: "Agioreiton Pateron" Editions, 1981); and (3) *Memorandum-Statement to Metropolitan Augustinos (Kantiotis) of Florina,* (Athens: "Agioreiton Pateron" Editions, 1983).

In these written reports of ours, we set forth, in an apologetic testimony based on canonical and ecclesiological criteria, the

reasons and causes of the deviation and apostasy of today's ecclesiastical leaders and the Shepherds of our Church, as well as the consequences thereof, namely: (1) the preaching of heresy, (2) the creation of schism, and (3) the division of the ecclesiastical body into "Anti-innovationists," the so-called "Church of the True Orthodox Christians," and the "Innovationists," the New Calendarist Ecumenists!

At this point, and before we enter into the main subject of our present report, we reckon it necessary to formulate the following affirmation, which is grievous, but as clear as daylight and objective: This situation of "Apostasy and Division" has to date in no way invited, as it should have, the concern of the competent Church leaders, entrusted as they are with guarding the "Unity of the Church"!

Rather, we notice with regret—justly, from the perspective of the "Genuine Conscience of the Church," which constitutes Her "highest criterion"—that a call for such concern meets with condemnation and disapproval, since the competent leaders in question, on account of the "ecumenist heresy" which they established and proclaimed through the evil "Patriarchal Edict" of 1920 from the Œcumenical Patriarchate, and despite the fact that this heresy, which is still being proclaimed, not only destroys every meaning of the Orthodox existence of our Church, but also of their own Orthodox existence, have displayed and display full and absolute dedication, with all their interest and eagerness, to the continuation of the ecumenist "Dialogue of Love" with the heterodox (heretics), and this, not on the basis of the "eternal landmarks which the Fathers set" (St. John of Damascus), but to the point of completely selling out their Orthodox convictions and attitudes through their spiritual and ecclesiastical contact and association—canonically forbidden—with the heterodox, even though to this day these heretics have shown no intention of repenting and returning to Orthodoxy!

Wholly contrary to the concern which they should show, the aforementioned Church leaders, excessively sensitive to the heterodox heretics, remain, after almost seventy years, not only completely unmoved and indifferent, but very hostile, through acts of violence and compulsion, as we shall see below, against the divided body of their Orthodox people, to the point of tearing utterly to shreds their Episcopal prestige and their Orthodox

ecclesiastical mission and being!

Consequently, in keeping with the above and specifically as a result of the anti-monastic tragedy that recently occurred on the Holy Mountain (something unparalleled in its annals), the "occupation," or more accurately "invasion," of the Holy Skete of the Prophet Elias and the arbitrary and forcible expulsion and "immediate" deportation from it of its Monastic Brotherhood, as these are recounted in the informative "Press Release" of May 31, 1992, publicly circulated by the Brotherhood (which we add below); but also because of the fact that we happen to be of the same "spiritual party," from the perspective of our priestly provenance, as the Brotherhood in question, we are induced to mention this matter to the leadership of the "Twenty Holy Monasteries of the Holy Mountain" through our following report. We consider it an obligation, on the one hand, to offer this paltry fraternal support to our suffering brothers in Christ, who were deported for their "confession of faith," thus responding to our monastic duty, according to the Apostolic exhortation telling us that, "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26); and, on the other hand, and above all, to make people realize fully that it is urgent and necessary to make every attempt, as dictated by that which pleases God, to restore to "Canonical and Ecclesiological" health the "condemned" ecclesiastical line and course of the Holy Mountain today (namely, its impermissible journey towards ecumenist apostasy), and in this way to promote an awareness that these attempts constitute an inviolable duty and obligation of the whole Hagiorite Brotherhood, insofar as the issues at hand are clearly a "matter of Faith" directly affecting the salvation of the soul!

In Desert of the Holy Mountain
The Skete of Saint Basil the Great
August 1992 (Old Style)

PRESS RELEASE

The Recent, Unheard-of Persecution of Monks from the Athonite Skete of the Prophet Elias

One hour from Karyes, the capital of the Holy Mountain, is the Skete of the Prophet Elias, which is a dependency of the Monastery of the Pantocrator. Since 1973, the lawful and canonical Superior of the Skete has been a Hieromonk from America, Father Seraphim (Babich) . Having been on the Holy Mountain since 1970, Father Seraphim and his *synodeia* succeeded in rebuilding and beautifying, at great expense and labor, this enormous skete.

In the year 1957, the Skete ceased commemorating the Oecumenical Patriarch, since it did not agree with the Papist line taken by the Patriarchate of Constantinople with regard to the so-called Ecumenical Movement. This movement is considered by all Orthodox Christians to be heretical, something, indeed, proclaimed in the past many times by the Holy Mountain and reaffirmed by His Beatitude, Patriarch Diodoros of Jerusalem, at the recent "convocation" at the Phanar (15 March 1992 N.S.).

Beginning in 1985, the Skete was placed under pressure to resume commemorating the Oecumenical Patriarch, but it did not submit to that pressure.

On May 20 of this year (N.S.), on Mid-Pentecost Wednesday, the Skete of the Prophet Elias was unexpectedly placed under siege by a contingent of policemen, Hieromonks, and Monks, headed by the Patriarchal Exarch, Bishop Athanasios, Metropolitan of Heliopolis.

Father Seraphim and the other Fathers of the Skete, in the midst of the ensuing turmoil and confusion, were pressured to accept the commemoration of the Patriarch or to leave the Holy Mountain immediately. The Fathers refused such commemoration and asked whether the administrative authorities on Mt. Athos had issued a writ ordering their expulsion. There was no such writ. The Fathers therefore asked for a delay of three days, so as to prepare their things. No such delay was granted them.

Surrounded by and under the strict supervision of police guards, the Fathers of the Skete gathered a few things at hand from their cells. Afterwards, they were transported by "Jeep" to Daphne by way of Karyes, where a boat took them to

Ouranoupolis, where they were mercilessly abandoned. In the meantime, behind them, the Skete, which was being pillaged by Monks from the Monastery of the Pantocrator, was placed under the strong guard of an armed police force.

The Fathers of the Skete, after this incredible behavior by the ecclesiastical and secular authorities—which certainly constitutes persecution for the Faith—, continue to be victimized, since their passports have not been returned to them (they are American citizens). The civil authorities also refuse to provide them with any official, written statement regarding the reasons for their expulsion.

The Monks of the Skete of the Prophet Elias, a dependency of the Monastery of the Pantocrator:

a) protest vigorously their illegal expulsion from the Garden of the All-Holy Theotokos;

b) denounce the un-Christian, unbrotherly, and barbaric behavior of the Monks, Hieromonks, and policemen who banished them;

c) make it known that there has come to fruition a persecution throughout the Holy Mountain of all those Fathers who are in opposition to ecumenism and the un-Orthodox policies of the Ecumenical Patriarch; and, finally,

d) declare that they will strive by every legal means to return to their Skete.

The Superior (Δικαῖος) of the Skete
Archimandrite Seraphim
31 May (N.S.), 1992
Sunday of the Blind Man

Temporary Address:
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II

PERSECUTION FOR THE FAITH
of The Exiled Fathers

To the Abbots and Superiors of the Twenty Sacred Monasteries of the Holy Mountain of Athos

Very Reverend Fathers:

Concerning the reasons for and the purpose of the present petition, which we are duly addressing to you and about which we previously spoke in the *Introduction,* we are hopeful that your discerning perception and spiritual experience, which derive from your singular virtues, will serve you to grasp and fathom their conceptual essence and significance through the free exercise of your God-pleasing and scrupulous judgment, a thing which can be achieved, to the extent that it is preceded by a complete rejection of all bias towards the contrary—whatever it may be—and of all partiality and expediency—elements, it should be noted, that are able to occasion only the affectation of judgment by inference.

We considered it a task of brotherly love in Christ and our bounden monastic duty to unite the voice of our Orthodox conscience with the spiritual pain and mental agony of our deported brethren, who are at present suffering as members of the Hagiorite Brotherhood and Family and as members of the one Body of the Church.

This spiritual obligation and this necessity, which apply to the entire Hagiorite conscience, are clearly evident in, are confirmed by, and are inferred from the clear and concrete evidence and the irrefragable actual circumstances set forth as follows, which, in our humble judgment, are, we think, sufficient to sway and persuade you, since the instance of what happened in particular to the Holy Skete of the Prophet Elias and its

Brotherhood—suffering, as a result of this, a "persecution for the Faith"—above all reflects the untoward situation that prevails today on the Holy Mountain, that is, a patently clear ecumenical deviation, ecclesiastically, and apostasy—unacceptable for the true Orthodox conscience—, created and subsequently perpetuated by the presiding ecclesiastical authorities of our sacred domain!

Moreover, in the first part of our present report we had occasion to observe that: the events mentioned in the "Press Release" cited above (of which, it should be noted, there was no accountable denial on the part of the appropriate Hagiorite Authorities) testify clearly to the conditions on the basis of which the unholy outrage of the forcible expulsion and deportation of the Fathers from the Skete of the Prophet Elias took place, a thing which compels them to invoke the legal intervention of the authorities, since this assault, emanating as it does from the Holy Mountain, brings into disrepute the true meaning of democracy and justice in Greece and utterly sets aside respect for, and the protection of, "human rights" and "freedom of conscience"!

However, the worst sign that marks and characterizes the "spiritual crime" perpetrated against the Fathers of the Skete by the spiritual and civil authorities of the Holy Mountain is not so much the "deprivation of their possessions" or the "armed physical presence" of those far from their holy repentance and from the Holy Mountain, but the ill-advised oppression of the most subtle "treasury" of our faith, which is called "conscience"!

This is precisely what their persecutors attempted to "achieve," albeit, unsuccessfully: to compel the Fathers to suppress the voice of their consciences, by agreeing to commemorate the Patriarch and to accept ecclesiastical communion with him and those of like mind with him!

This activity of the enemies in question constitutes, indeed, a clear "excuse in sins," which is aimed at covering up their condemned activity and the actions against them, in that they know better than anyone else that those who do not commemorate the Œcumenical Patriarch (who is liable to canonical trial for the perpetuation of the calendar schism and for the acceptance, since 1920, of the ecumenist heresy proclaimed by him to all the world) are not only the Fathers of Prophet Elias Skete, but also almost 150 other Hagiorite Fathers.

Likewise, these persecutors are well aware that, on the basis

of ecclesiological necessity, the commemoration of the presiding Bishop (in this case, on Mt. Athos, the Patriarch), as well as ecclesiastical communion with him, can—and indeed ought—to take place *only* when there is a likeness of (correct) understanding in the faith between the one who commemorates and the one who is being commemorated; that is, when the Bishop who is commemorated does not err "in piety and righteousness" and is not worthy of being "fenced off" or "walled off" by the *pleroma* "in resistance to innovation," according to the Canon Law of the Church and the general practice of the Church, "before a clear Synodal verdict has been pronounced and he has been completely condemned" (First-and-Second Synod, Canon 15)—something at complete odds, today, with the presiding ecclesiastical authority of the Patriarchate of Constantinople!

This pretext of "commemoration," then, cannot "cover" as a prop the basic goal of the present action, because in accordance with the data we mentioned above, it is devoid of any legal substance, and for another main reason, that no written letter or decision on the matter has been either published by the authorities of the Holy Community or been shown by them, as it should have been, to the persecuted Fathers!

So, in the name of what verdict, let us ask, did the police authorities of the Holy Mountain perpetrate the forcible expulsion and deportation in question from the aforementioned Holy Skete and from the Holy Mountain? This verdict (if such it was) should have been passed previously by the civil authorities of the Holy Mountain, in accordance with the statute in force on the Holy Mountain (Article 78 of the *Constitutional Charter*), as "executible," since it is, above all, the duty of the Civil Governor of the Holy Mountain to "draw the attention of the Holy Community to transgressions of any kind of monastic authority on the Mountain" (Articles 3, 4 and 8 of the Legislative Order of September 10, 1926, ratifying the *Constitutional Charter of the Holy Mountain*), on the basis of which he "supervises the preservation of the *status quo*...."

If, on the other hand, as it is rumored, the Holy Community of the Holy Mountain played no part in the above assault, and what happened in their absence and in an overstepping of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchal Delegation on the Holy Mountain or by the initiative or personal intervention of one of its members,

what, then, is the duty of the Holy Community with regard to its administrative authority at present, in view of the abolition in this manner of the power of the laws and privileges of the Holy Mountain? Is it ever possible for any authority, being obliged to put into practice its legal rights and obligations, to sell these out so naïvely and indifferently, without legal consequences and the unpleasant confirmatory results that are thereby entailed, given that every transgression brings with it a corresponding punishment? We think that the proper government representatives of the Greek justice system, and in particular the "Department of Churches" of the Foreign Ministry, under which, as we know, the Holy Mountain comes directly and administratively, should voluntarily comment on this subject.

At any rate, in the final analysis, the reason why we cannot commemorate the name of the Œcumenical Patriarch on the Holy Mountain (as things stand today, on account of the ongoing ecclesiastical apostasy of the so-called "Ecumenical Movement and Theory") is that we are obliged, ecclesiologically, to be at one with our Orthodox way of thinking, that is, our Orthodox convictions, which are based on the Church Canons, and to apply these Canons to the policies and course of the Patriarchate's Ecumenist and anti-Orthodox attitude!

Since, we repeat, the meaning and significance of commemoration indicates a likeness of Faith between the commemorator and the commemorated, we should in general terms accept the panheresy of Ecumenism proclaimed to all the world by the "Patriarchal Encyclical" of 1920, which through the "Branch Theory" blasphemes against the uniqueness of our Holy Orthodox Church of Christ! By an inescapable consequence, and on the basis of the above "Patriarchal Encyclical," we ought to believe that the heterodox, heretical "Christian" confessions, that is, the Pope and the Protestants in general, are "sister-Churches" of Christ, "partakers of redemptive Grace," etc., with Priesthood, Mysteries, and Apostolic Succession, so that we can pray and liturgize with them, a thing which the Ecumenists in Constantinople perpetrate and practice today, in complete opposition to their episcopal mission—from the notorious Athenagoras forward, and both the Hierarchs of the Œcumenical Patriarchate as well as various other Ecumenist, New Calendarist Hierarchs!

Likewise, for "agreement and unanimity" in the likeness of

Faith with our presiding ecclesiastical authority and the consequent canonical commemoration of the name of its presiding Bishop, we would have to disavow also the established Orthodox Calendar handed down in the Church by the Fathers, and accept the "Gregorian" or Papal Calendar that was repeatedly condemned by Synods in their Proceedings, on account of which there exists even today the accursed "Calendar schism" of 1924, which split the (liturgical and worshipping) "unity of the Church," and even today keeps the *pleroma* of the Church faithful in division!

We should, then, first believe precisely and unhesitatingly in all the destructive attitudes towards the Orthodox Faith which the presiding ecclesiastical authority of the Holy Mountain "publicly" proclaims and actually demonstrates in practice and theory, through the aforementioned actions, that it believes; and since in this way our Orthodox conscience would have been completely perverted, we should then be in a position to consider it our bounden duty to commemorate the Patriarch on the Holy Mountain.

However, since by the Grace of God it is not possible for us, even unto death, to deny the Orthodox *phronema* of our Church, and to agree and journey with our established ecclesiastical authority, which, as we said before, is "on trial" before the Synods and, through our "walling off" is "potentially out of communion" with us, for this reason not only are we not obligated to commemorate such an authority, but by Divine right it becomes a "sin and condemnation" for everyone with an Orthodox frame of mind—in particular, for the Hagiorite Fathers who do commemorate the Patriarch and who, according to the clearest Patristic teaching on the matter, "even if they have not been sunk by their thoughts, nonetheless [through commemoration] are being destroyed by their communion with heresy" (St. Theodore the Studite)!

In such a case, the obligatory breaking-off of commemoration of the Patriarch is a consequence of the canonically enjoined ecclesiastical action of "walling" oneself "off" from a Bishop who is erring "in piety and righteousness," and who for this reason is "condemned." The fact that this action is obligatory, before a "Synodal condemnation" has taken place, manifestly proves, on the one hand, that the one who walls himself off, according to the

clearest Synodal judgment on the matter, "has the right and at the same time the *duty*" to put this into practice "at once" (and not that, if he wishes, he "may" wall himself off, according to the mistaken understanding of those who are wise in their own conceit and according to the interpretation put forward by "spiritual guides" who wear the Great Schema and are thus "deceivers and deceived" [2 Timothy 3:13]); and, on the other hand, that he who walls himself off "will incur no canonical penalty," but "will be praised still more" as "rescuing the Church from divisions and schisms."

In spite of these proofs and testimonies, more radiant than the Sun, the force and validity of which ought to constitute a "clear course" and to prevail in the consciences of every faithful man of good conscience, but in particular in the intentions of the leading figures of the Hagiorite Brotherhood—in spite of these, we repeat, the Athonite authorities, reckoning as nothing these wise commandments of the Fathers of the Synods, inspired by the Holy Spirit, completely contrary to every legal and canonical norm, carried out the expulsion and deportation of the Fathers of the Skete of the Prophet Elias, as we noted before, not hesitating in any way to show themselves persecutors and adversaries of "Orthodox consistency" and reminding us in this way that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

Through the actual circumstances mentioned above it is demonstrated that the indispensable elements that are canonically prerequisite for the obligatory commemoration of the Patriarch are completely absent from the case before us, a fact which precludes any justification for the reproach and accusation deliberately, malevolently or even deludedly imputed against us of "disobedience" to our presiding ecclesiastical authority, since that authority is on trial before the Synods as being canonically judged "to be erring in piety and righteousness," and is worthy of being "fenced off" and "walled off" by the anti-innovationist *pleroma* of the Church, that is, on account of the condemned position and situation in which, according to what we said above, this self-same authority voluntarily and wrongly finds itself.

The Orthodox, "God-pleasing resistance" (St. Theodore the Studite) exhibited, by Divine Grace, on our part, and the confidence "which hath great recompense of reward" (Hebrews

10:35), make us worthy to save and preserve the Orthodox essence and quality, as much of our Holy Church as of ourselves, given that only in this way, that is, as an anti-innovationist *pleroma*, is it possible for us to stand canonically WITHIN THE CHURCH.

On this basis, we can say that our position today constitutes a sign of hope for every faithful Orthodox of good conscience, because our God-pleasing resistance testifies and demonstrates that the struggle of real Orthodox confessors is still being preserved on the Holy Mountain—even if by a minority—, in imitation of the Holy Hagiorite Fathers, especially those who were martyred under the Latin-minded Patriarch Bekkos on account of their refusal (precisely, that is, as it is with us) to commemorate his name as Patriarch.

Why, however, should an event take place which is so completely unacceptable for the Holy Mountain and which damages it irreparably? That is: Why should we—and those who think like us—, who make up the minority of the Holy Mountain, as the *pleroma* of the Church which in Orthodox manner opposes innovation and undertakes "God-pleasing resistance," preserve hereby the Orthodox essence and the God-pleasing perpetuation of the general mission of the Holy Mountain, while its majority conducts itself in a negative fashion, as an "innovating" *pleroma* of the Church, causing scandal and division to the harmony and unity of the Hagiorite Brotherhood and spiritual corruption and damage to the people of the Church, who suffer such problems in obeying "their leaders"—through commemoration and communion—so indiscriminately, aimlessly and superficially as to "imitate their faith," apart from and in spite of the Apostolic commandment and injunction, according to which we must first consider "the end of their conversation" and afterwards imitate their faith, insofar, that is, as it is proven that they (the spiritual shepherds and leaders) really and truly "watch for [our] souls" (Hebrews 13:7, 17)?

For this reason, all of the Hagiorite Brotherhood, we think, should be unbreakably bound together and united in the unity of the Faith, so that "with one mouth and one heart" and far from all innovation, false belief, schism and heresy, it may save and preserve intact—all being still in one body—the Orthodox essence, nature, and lofty mission of the Holy Mountain, and show through actual confession that the Holy Mountain is really a

"bastion of the Faith," a "citadel of Orthodoxy" and a sure "Haven of Salvation," a thing which the entire Orthodox Church and the faithful people await in agony and heartily desire and wish, so that in this way they may be able to face in a God-pleasing manner today's Antichristian, Ecumenist apostasy, for the assurance of the salvation of their souls!

But apart from the demanding legal and moral consequence of the actions taken against the Skete of the Prophet Elias, the direct interest provoked over these actions is manifestly obligatory in terms of duty, insofar as the Holy Monasteries of the Holy Mountain compose and constitute the Monastic Government of our Holy Domain in their own right; this government is exercised through representatives of the Monasteries, in accordance with its privileged *status quo,* in effect from the beginning (Article 1 of the *Constitutional Charter*).

On the basis of this, we believe that the information and assurances we have provided, to the best of our ability, will certainly provoke your immediate interest in a further investigation into the subject at hand.

As for the administrative agency, its interest is contained in the obligation, on the basis of the law, to condemn the action of expulsion and provide for a complete restoration of the Fathers who were wronged, since: "nobody is to be judged without a hearing, no penalty is to be imposed except on the basis of a Law or a Sacred Canon, and nobody is to be deprived against his will or his natural Judge" (Article 7 of the Legislative Order of September 10, 1926), but also since the explicit legal arrangements concerning the "imposition of penalties" and the "execution of decisions" that are presupposed and have force on the Holy Mountain were not applied in the present case by the proper Athonite authorities! Consequently, these actual circumstances, needless to say, make the action of expulsion that was undertaken in this matter, and carried out entirely high-handedly, devoid of legal validity, and for this reason this is considered invalid and as never having happened.

If, however, in spite of this, the proper Athonite authorities, for whatever reason, are not disposed and do not hasten, as they are duly obliged, to restore the Fathers who were high-handedly expelled from the former place of their Holy Repentance, the Holy Skete of the Prophet Elias—which we wish with all our

heart does not happen—, but wish to continue such persecution against other Hagiorite Fathers engaging in "Orthodox resistance," they should know that by acting in such a way they become "morally culpable perpetrators" and co-workers in the decisive abolition of the force of the spiritual and administrative institutions and privileges of the Holy Mountain. Every indifference and negligence that they should happen to display will have, as an immediate bad consequence, the gradual abolition—from ourselves, the very Hagiorites—of the "self-governing," privileged Athonite régime, which constitutes a respected repository of ancient and traditional authority, acquired with so many struggles and toils and handed down to us today to guard and continue, precisely for the good of our Holy Domain and its witness and lofty mission in general.

Along these lines, the whole Hagiorite Brotherhood should seriously take into consideration that the circumstance of this illegal and invalid action of expulsion—artless, aimless and lacking psychological insight—constitutes, in absolutely objective scrupulosity, an incident with unforeseen consequences, if it is continued, directly proceeding from today's ecclesiastical situation, as we shall see below (unheard-of in the annals of the Church), untoward, and unacceptable for the entire Orthodox Christian conscience, resulting from the Ecumenist heresy and the schism deriving from it, from deviation and apostasy.

The imperative investigation of the essential, spiritual side of the present topic and, to be precise, concerning pressure place on us to commemorate the name of the Patriarch of Constantinople and to enter into ecclesiastical communion with him—a thing which is the sole and fundamental cause of the whole subject—, constitutes a special spiritual obligation and issue for direct attention and analysis, both from the standpoint of "Canonical and Ecclesiological exactness" and from the standpoint of an "Orthodox Patristic understanding," for the entire Hagiorite Brotherhood, without exception.

On precisely this point, we have already formulated the fundamental causes and reasons, by virtue of which it is proved that the truly ecclesiastical obligation of commemoration happens—in this case—to be canonically incapable of application, but must be rejected as unacceptable, in that our presiding ecclesiastical authority is that which created and continues to perpetuate, irrevocably, a reprehensible ecclesiastical situation,

within which it willfully chooses to be involved.

Since, however, from this situation there inevitably arises the "subject of Faith"—a Faith "at risk," indeed—, which is more important than anything else and which directly impinges on the sure salvation of the souls of all of us, the faithful members of the Church, we consider it a worthy enterprise to make reference to the following issues—here where the essential goal of our present witness is chiefly focused.

III

THE APOSTASY OF THE SHEPHERDS

Since today's prevailing situation of confusion and apostasy, "by the judgments which the Lord knows," is getting unrestrainedly worse within our Holy Church—though such should not be—, on account of the manifest and intolerable goals and plans and the generally anti-Orthodox policy and course of Her contemporary spiritual leaders, it is, for this reason, the inviolable duty and obligation of every faithful Orthodox Christian, and especially of every Athonite, in this situation to "come out from the midst" of these shepherds "and be separated" for the redemption of their souls and their sure salvation (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:17).

We would not be wholly removed from reality if we stressed that this situation constitutes an event which has not occurred in the entire life of the Church until today, because our Church has never been so systematically beset by her own shepherds, who, being politicians full of anti-Orthodox, ecumenist deviation, cause harm to the substance of Orthodoxy and to her mission and *pleroma*! The Apostle might, indeed, have had them in mind (Acts 20:28-30), when he said that...there shall enter into the Church "grievous wolves...not sparing the flock..., speaking perverse things... ."

The spiritual confusion, deviation and apostasy from the faith that are being brought to pass in the Church today are visible and are attested through the following actual and undeniable evidence and proofs.

Since, however, we are Orthodox and, indeed, as Hagiorites, "guardians of our faith"—specifically on account of our monastic and Priestly attributes—by Divine Grace, we must first and foremost be precisely acquainted with the context of our spiritual and ecclesiastical rights and obligations, within which our Holy Mother Church allows and requires us to be properly moved in each successive circumstance and in which we are obliged dutifully to respond to our lofty and sacred mission, that of protecting our Orthodox existence and that of the Church.

In accordance with this data, and for reasons of precise orientation, we must always take into our consideration that:

"Beyond the operative level and the highest administrative authority of the Orthodox Church, which is the Œcumenical Synod, the genuine ecclesiastical conscience has the capacity to decide definitely on the œcumenical validity of a Synod, without it constituting some operative authority higher than the Œcumenical Synod. This conscience, being a diffused and indefinite authority and one which acts as a sort of focus for the validity of the entire Church, and being constituted by the expression of a unanimous mind of the whole *pleroma* of the Church, that is, the clergy and the people, ratifies or nullifies the decisions of Œcumenical Synods and seals their œcumenical validity."

Likewise, "action 'by *oikonomia*,' like all of the actions of a Patriarch and the Synod, are subject, according to an Orthodox understanding, to the decision of the criterion which is the conscience of the whole body of the Church.... Over and above the competency provided by the laws and the Sacred Canons, there is the moral competency of the whole *pleroma* of the Church, which is incorruptible" (See John Karmiris, *Orthodox Ecclesiology* [in Greek; Athens, 1973], p. 349, n. 2).

From the practice of the Church, in keeping with what we have observed, there is evidence that: incorrect Synodal decisions, like actions "by *oikonomia*" of a Patriarch or a Synod which are not undertaken according to "Orthodox understanding," cannot be considered the "true voice of the Church," because on this account, they cannot become "unanimously accepted" by the entire *pleroma* of the Church—the clergy, that is, and the people, which make up the "incorruptible moral standard" and the Church's "genuine conscience."

As we know, "five great apostasies are enumerated in Scripture. (1) That of Adam, (2) that at the time of the flood, (3) that (subsequent) one of...the Gentiles, (4) that of the disobedient Jews, and (5) that of the coming Antichrist.... The fifth is at work as the 'mystery of iniquity' in the age of Christianity and will come to an end at the time of the consummation 'of this world'.... Through the apostasy of Antichrist the salvation of man in Christ through the Church is impeded, and the satanic annihilation of this salvation from the face of the earth will be undertaken" (See A.D. Delembasis, *The Lord's Pascha* [in Greek; Athens, 1985], p. 213).

On account of these apocalyptic days which we are going through, utterly deplorable is the fact that, while the Œcumenical Patriarchate ought, on the basis of its highest mission and calling, to be truly a Pinnacle of Orthodoxy and a far-shining beacon of our Holy Faith, despite this and completely to the contrary, it turns out to confirm absolutely that it is the creator of the initial phase and cause of today's ecclesiastical confusion and apostasy, since it played a leading part itself in the creation of the Ecumenical Movement through the notorious Patriarchal Encyclical of 1920, with which we shall deal with in the following chapter.

IV

THE PATRIARCHAL ENCYCLICAL OF 1920

At the outset, we had occasion to observe that it should not be considered fortuitous or a mere coincidence how and why this Patriarchal Encyclical of four pages and roughly seven hundred words not only makes no reference whatsoever to the Orthodox Church, as it should have done throughout the text, but completely fails to mention the word "Orthodoxy," even in a general way, using, rather, a phrase suited to ecumenist expediency: "the Christian Churches"!

This fact is made evident if we turn to the open testimony of the same Encyclical (which, it should be noted, deliberately avoids showing that such reference is proper to an Orthodox understanding and purpose), by the admission of which the meaning and definition of the "uniqueness" of the Orthodox *phronema* constitute the "pretensions" "of ancient superstitions and habits," which create "difficulties so great as formerly to thwart the work of unification"!

As it should be known, this "Encyclical," addressed to the "Churches of Christ everywhere," intends and recognizes as such the entire "mish-mash" of the heterodox and heretics! Consequently, it believes, confesses, and proclaims that "rapprochement and communion" with them "is not excluded by the dogmatic differences existing between them"! Likewise, it considers and acknowledges these "Churches" as "sisters and worthy of reverence," and for this reason "fellow-heirs and of the same body [sharing in] the promise of God in Christ" (cf. Ephesians 3:6)! In other words, there is a full recognition, admission, and acceptance by the authentic representatives of Orthodoxy, and this in a fully official manner, that the heterodox and heretics possess: Priesthood, Mysteries, and Apostolic Succession! For this reason, moreover, joint prayer, joint commemoration, joint observance of Feast Days, joint blessings, and liturgical concelebration are allowed to be conducted with them!

"The acceptance of a unified calendar for the simultaneous celebration of the great Christian feasts by all the Churches" is considered by the Encyclical to be indispensable for the goal of this union ecumenistically intended and pursued.

About this matter, although it may be reckoned superfluous to write so, it easily follows that, for the sake of pushing forward this imagined union, those who accepted the "Calendar Reform" of the Churches thought it wholly advantageous and preferable to create a "Schism" among the *Pleroma* of the Orthodox Church (which schism is preserved and continued unconsciously and irreparably even today among those who created this New Calendarist Ecumenism), seeing that "difficulties" and the "thwarting" of the ecumemist goals and plans would thereby be avoided!

So where, on this issue, is "the good shepherd," who "giveth his life for the sheep" and not for "the other sheep" which "are not of this fold" (See St. John 10:11, 16)? Indeed, those who created the "Schism" in question should take note that "not even through a martyr's blood is it [their betrayal] forgiven." He who "follows a schismatic shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven" (St. Ignatios, *Epistle to the Philadelphians* 3:3)!

On the basis of the evidence set forth above, it can be easily inferred that the Patriarchal "Encyclical" of 1920 not only completely fails to echo the "true voice of the Church," but, on the contrary, intentionally overlooks its own Orthodox "foundation." Judged from an Orthodox canonical standpoint, it deserves the greatest condemnation, insofar as this "fall in the faith" on the part of the presiding leaders of the Œcumenical Patriarchate, from whom this document derives, reaches back to such a degree of "apostasy" that it was put forth by "public" proclamation and by an undisguised, unfeigned unanimous written decision by them!

The most serious form of apostasy provoked by the "Proclamation" rests on the fact that it denies the pan-orthodox "super-dogma," as it were, by virtue of which our Holy Mother Church, "according to the unified mind (and confession) of the Fathers and the Synods," is considered, as we said before, "One" and unique, just as Christ, Her Head, Who cannot have many bodies and whose "substance" is the "unity of faith," is also one and unique.

Likewise, according to the saying of the Lord, the ever-living "Vine" (St. John 15:5), that is, the Church, is never divided, but only the unfruitful branches fall from it and become parched, that is, those who are cut off from Her, the heterodox heretics whom

the Œcumenical Patriarchate, "fallen in faith," as well as all the "Orthodox" members of the World Council of Churches, in no way acknowledge and treat as heretics!

Hence, because of this most fundamental "canonical rationale," the whole "ecclesiastical leadership" of the Œcumenical Patriarchate, which published the above "Proclamation," is judged from an Orthodox point of view "to have fallen in faith," going in this way on trial before the Synods, according to ecclesiastical law. This is so, not only on account of the anti-Orthodox phrases and positions of the "Proclamation" as indicated above, which are directly opposed to the "Mind of the Church," but also on account of the anti-Orthodox direction and the anti-ecclesiastical policy and course of the leadership, which policy and course are based on these phrases and positions and which are clearly put forth "publicly," as we said before, "in theory," "in practice," and "in actuality," in the furtherance of the leadership's ecumenist goals and aims!

Finally, consistent with this heretical proclamation, all of the local Orthodox Churches and Patriarchates (which until now have received the "Proclamation" in question without reservation and protest), as well as every conscientious and faithful Christian, in order to preserve and guard their Orthodox being, must reckon it their sacred obligation and indispensable duty to *disavow* this "Proclamation" in both practice and actuality, that is, by thus "walling themselves off," as the Canons dictate, from the presiding ecclesiastical authority of the Œcumenical Patriarchate, which is "on trial;" in particular, this holds for the Athonite ecclesiastical *Pleroma,* which is directly subject to the Patriarchate, since no "ecclesiastical communion" and "commemoration" with it must be permitted, for the reason that if this commemoration and communion are continued, they will bring this *pleroma* into "destruction by heresy."

V

ECUMENISM AND THE W.C.C.

The "Ecumenical Movement" and the idea of ecumenism, "patronizingly" supported by the foregoing Patriarchal "Encyclical," which is based on the heresies as much of Papism, by way of the the Vatican, as of Protestantism, by way of the "World Council of Churches" (W.C.C.), aim, by means of the heretical "branch theory," at the non-dogmatic union of all "separated Christian branches," that is, heterodox and heretics, with which the Orthodox Church is equated!

It should be soberly pointed out that this Ecumenical Movement constitutes nothing other than a heresy, indeed the worst of the heresies. This heretical quality makes it absolutely a fundamental element of the most basic "harbinger" of the plans of the Antichrist, given that its objective aim is the syncretistic adaptation and amalgamation of the Orthodox Christian Faith (and Church) through the W.C.C. (in which it has its headquarters) into an Ecumenist "Universal Religion"! The manifestations of this attempt and activity that are being vigorously pursued for the attainment of the above goal, perpetuated in the form of "Dialogues of Love," appear on the level of International Congresses (like those in Vancouver, Lima, Assisi, and Canberra, etc.), with the grievous and extremely disheartening approval of "Delegations of the Orthodox Churches," who take part in these congresses without protest and, for this reason, make their participation treacherous and negative!

We can positively state that the "Delegations" of the Orthodox Churches which are in the W.C.C., indeed, to be specific, the majority of them as "founding members," reap the treacherous fruits of denial and apostasy, since, on the basis of the "branch theory" (which has its foundation in this very Patriarchal "Encyclical" of 1920), they engage in dialogues with the heterodox "on equal terms." They are denuded in a confessional capacity, since they have been substantially deprived of the right, as Orthodox, to recommend, put forward, and confess their Orthodox convictions and attitudes, and indeed that which is

binding on them, the "Uniqueness" in faith and truth of our Holy Orthodox Church, which constitutes Her Dogmatic "substance," and which the "branch theory" absolutely destroys and completely overlooks!!

Consequently, "Ecumenism is a common name for the pseudo-Christianities, the pseudo-churches of Western Europe, ... with Papism at its head. All of these pseudo-Christians, all of the pseudo-churches, are nothing other than one heresy side by side with another heresy.... As history proceeded, the different heresies denied or distorted certain characteristics of the God-man, the Lord Jesus, and these European heresies wholly removed the God-man and in His place substituted European man. Here there is no essential difference between Papism, Protestantism, Ecumenism and other heresies, whose name is 'Legion'" (Archimandrite Justin [Popovich], *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism* [Thessaloniki: "Orthodoxos Kypseli" Publications, 1974], p. 224).

But how is it possible for the "World Religion" or "Church"—which is everything other than Orthodox—, which the "Ecumenical Movement" of the W.C.C. has as its aim and which the Œcumenical Patriarchate envisions with its characterization of the "Union of the Churches," to be the "Will of the Lord," given that the W.C.C. has totally rejected every element necessary to the adoption of the dogmatic definition of the "Uniqueness" of the Orthodox Apostolic Church?

These different attitudes, unheard-of in the Orthodox domain of our Church, are not "simple phrases" or "polite courtesies," which have been successively set forth for almost seventy years by the W.C.C. since its inception and that of its precursors, but constitute a systematic program of rejecting the Orthodox viewpoint and replacing it, as we have said, with the obligatory acceptance, on the part of all of its members, of the super-dogma of the "branch theory"!

These proclamations and activities of the New Calendarist Ecumenists, which have been perpetrated by them "in public" and are condemned canonically by the Church, make them "potential" schismatics and heretics (until, that is, "Synodal judgment" officially proclaims them such), a condition which no faithful can accept or in any way endure, while remaining pious and Orthodox, by communing with such "erring" shepherds!

Formally, then, there is evidence that:

"Following the holy Apostles, the Fathers and Teachers of the Church with the same zeal confess, proclaim, and defend the unity and uniqueness of the Orthodox Church. Their zeal for the preservation of the unity of the Church was displayed chiefly in instances when certain men and groups seceded from the Church, that is, in cases of heresies and schisms. On the subject of unity, the Œcumenical and Local Synods of the Church had and have special significance and importance. In the unified attitude of the Fathers and the Synods, the Church is not only one, but also unique, because the one and unique God-man, her Head, cannot have many bodies. The Church is one and unique, because she is the body of the one and unique Christ. The division of the Church is ontologically impossible, and for this reason there was never a division of the Church, but only separation from the Church. According to the word of the Lord, the Vine is not divided, but only the branches that are willingly unfruitful fall off the ever-living Vine and become withered (cf. St. John 15:1-6). The heretics and schismatics seceded and were cut off from the one undivided Church of Christ at different times, and consequently cease to be members of the Church and fellow-members of her Theanthropic body. Such at first were the Gnostics, and after them the Arians and the *Pneumatomachoi* [those who denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, a heresy condemned by the Second Œcumenical Synod in 381—*Tr.*], and then the Monophysites, the Iconoclasts, and finally the Roman Catholics, the Protestants, the Uniates and all the rest of the heretical and schismatic Legion" (Archimandrite Justin, op. cit., pp. 81-82).

Now, "the Orthodox dogma, rather the pan-dogma, concerning the Church was rejected and replaced by the heretical Latin pan-dogma of the primacy and infallibility of the Pope, that is, of a man. Out of this panheresy other heresies were and are continually born...; each Protestant is an independent Pope in all questions of faith. This forever leads from one spiritual death to another....

"Since this is how things stand, for Papist-Protestant Ecumenism, then, with its pseudo-church and its pseudo-Christianity, there is no way out of its impasse except whole-hearted repentance before the God-man Christ and His Orthodox Catholic Church. Repentance is the remedy for every sin....

"Without repentance and reception into the true Church of

Christ, it is unnatural and inconceivable for anyone to speak about the union of the 'Churches,' about a dialogue of love, about...intercommunion. Most important of all is that one should become a 'fellow-member' of the Theanthropic body of the Church of Christ....

"The contemporary 'dialogue of love,' which is carried on under the form of naked sentimentality, is in reality an unbelieving denial of the saving sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth (2 Thessalonians 2:13), that is, of the unique saving 'love of the truth' (2 Thessalonians 2:10). The essence of love is the truth; love lives and exists when it is truthful. The truth is the heart of each Theanthropic virtue, and consequently also of love.... In Christ we men live 'speaking the truth in love...' (Ephesians 4:15).

"Let us not be deceived. There exists also a 'dialogue of falsehood,' when those engaging in dialogue consciously or unconsciously lie one to another. Such a dialogue is familiar to the 'father of lies,' the Devil, 'for he is a liar and the father of it' (St. John 8:44). It is familiar also to all his willing or unwilling collaborators, when they design to accomplish good by means of evil, to attain to truth with the aid of falsehood. There is no 'dialogue of love' without the dialogue of truth. Otherwise, such a dialogue is unnatural and false. Hence the injunction of the Apostle asks that love be 'without dissimulation' (Romans 12:9).

"There is no doubt that the Patristic measure of love towards men and of their relation to heretics, inherited from the Apostles, has an entirely Theanthropic character. The following words of St. Maximos the Confessor express this truth of faith perfectly:

"'For faith is the basis of those things coming before it, I mean hope and love, assuredly underlying the truth' (*Patrologia Graeca* 90:1189A).

"'I do not wish to distress the heretics, nor do I write these things rejoicing in their hardship—God forbid—, but rather rejoicing and taking delight in their return. For what is more pleasing for the faithful than to behold the scattered children of God being gathered together into one? Nor do I write exhorting you to prefer harshness to humanity—may I not be so insane—, but beseeching you both to do and practice good to all men, becoming all things to all men, with attention and scrutiny, as each has need of you. I wish and beg you to be completely severe and implacable only when it comes to joining in any way

whatsoever with heretics in confirming their deranged opinions. For I reckon it to be misanthropy and a departure from Divine love to attempt to strengthen error so that those already seized by it undergo still more corruption' (Epistle 12; *Patrologia Graeca* 91:465C).

"The teaching of the Orthodox Church of the God-man Christ with regard to heretics, formulated by the holy Apostles, the holy Fathers, and the holy Synods, is the following: The heresies are not the Church, nor can they be the Church. This is why they cannot have holy Mysteries, and in particular the Mystery of the Eucharist, this Mystery of Mysteries. For the divine Eucharist is precisely everything and all things in the Church....

"...Intercommunion with the heretics in the holy Mysteries, particularly in the divine Eucharist, is the most shameless betrayal of the Lord Jesus Christ, the betrayal of Judas. It is a matter, above all, of betraying the whole Church of Christ.... The concept of intercommunion is in itself contradictory and inconceivable for the Orthodox catholic conscience" (Archimandrite Justin, *ibid.*, pp. 224- 229).

* * *

The heights of ecumenist intoxication have reached such an unimaginable point that blasphemous phrases, previously unheard-of, are exclaimed to the detriment of our Holy Church. Ecumenist clergy call her "narcissistic," precisely because of her Orthodox "essence" and "character"![1] Now, the question arises: In what else should our Holy Church boast and what else should she think, teach, preach and assert—in both theory and practice—than the Truth of our Christian Faith contained in Orthodoxy?

Orthodoxy owes her "redemptive" Grace, as a "Divine Institution," being what she is with her faithful-Orthodox

[1] On February 27, 1988, after the Festal Vespers of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon, representing the late Œcumenical Patriarch Demetrios, denounced Orthodoxy as "narcissistic," opining that "the era of narcissistic Orthodoxy has now passed away"! (*Phone ton Pateron* 3.2 [Oct.-Dec. 1989], p. 4). The Patriarch and the other members of the Holy Synod, including no doubt the present Patriarch Bartholomaios, apparently kept silent as the former Professor Zizioulas uttered his blasphemies. More recently, Patriarch Bartholomaios has gone so far as to claim that it is a mockery of Christ to affirm that the Orthodox Church *alone* is the True Church of Christ! [*Tr.*]

Pleroma, to this "essence" and "character" of hers. If, as this unheard-of blasphemy would have it, one who boasts or who dutifully struggles for the divine Gift of the true faith and sure salvation, which Orthodoxy alone bestows..., "is narcissistic," does the one who offers such a characterization perhaps know something else, other than that of which we have boasted, which he could recommend to Orthodoxy, so that she could become free from what he supposes to be the vice of Narcissism? (!!!) But such blasphemies, remaining unrebuked by the proper presiding ecclesiastical authority, are considered suitable and acceptable!

It is on the account of this damnable spiritual captivity of the Orthodox "Delegations" that they accomplish no God-pleasing purpose or mission, being corroded ideologically by the ecumenical movement and its ideology and suffering and struggling completely in vain, much to their condemnation, for seventy years and more, so that "the vision of Christian unity should not be lost" (according to a recent statement of the Patriarchate), always on the basis, assuredly, of the ecumenical movement and its ideology, of which, it should be noted, the Œcumenical Patriarchate is the "leading light" and creator! (See the newspaper *Kathemerine,* March 15, 1992).

If one wishes to form an image of the harm being treacherously done to our Holy Orthodox Church by means of the W.C.C., as much on the part of its "Orthodox" members as that of the heterodox heretics and those of other religions, he can read the "Brief Orthodox Critical Attestation" about the recent seventh General Assembly of the W.C.C. in Canberra, Australia (February 7-20, 1991), which was published in the periodical *Orthodoxos Enstasis kai Martyria,* vol. 2, nos. 22-23 (January-June 1991), pp. 226-276, Part 1 (to be continued).

Consequently, the plans being systematically put into effect for the intolerable continuation and eventual realization of the ecumenist "vision" on the part of the Œcumenical Patriarchate are of particular importance and meaning with regard to the apostasy that is being accomplished, as are the constrictive and indispensable declarations that have already become commonplace and are unfailingly uttered by the Patriarchs who have succeeded the notorious Athenagoras. These statements constitute an explicit ecumenist commitment and confession and are, moreover, prerequisites for their election and recognition as

Patriarch: they promise "faithfully to follow the line of their predecessors"!

It is evident, we imagine, that the foregoing promise is wholly superfluous, to the extent that the meaning and importance of the above "Proclamation" [the Encyclical of 1920] speaks for itself eloquently and affirmatively....

I have reckoned that the demonstrative evidence set out above, which includes the aforementioned Patriarchal "Encyclical," by virtue of which the "Ecumenist Heresy" within the W.C.C. laid the foundations for its provenance, was full and sufficient to prove and testify that a program of ecumenist deviation and apostasy are being undertaken. For this reason I also thought it expedient to omit a great many other such things, out of consideration for space and in order to keep my account concise (namely, well known, anti-Orthodox, heretical and blasphemous declarations, actions, and activities, such as those of Athenagoras and Demetrios of Constantinople, Athenagoras of Thyateira and Great Britain, Iakovos of America, and Stylianos of Australia, and the other fervent ecumenists, as well as their various other acts of ecclesiastical communion—strictly condemned—with heterodox heretics), since all these have as their source and point of departure the ecumenist heresy mentioned briefly above, which a great many serious writings deal with at length.

* * *

Finally, with regard to the need—trumpeted by various people in recent times—for unity, agreement, and rallying of Orthodox forces, action which aims at concealing protest, as in the recently convened "Panorthodox" Assembly of the Phanar, with its typical format and its ecumenist understanding and agreement, I consider the following clarification expedient:

Nobody would disagree that the need for "unity and agreement" in the entire body that represents Orthodoxy, that is, the absolute "rallying" of the whole *pleroma* of the Orthodox Church of Christ, which is "One," is an indispensable, imperative duty and obligation of every faithful Orthodox.

The sole presupposition, however, for the attainment of this indisputably necessary unity and rallying is the "unity of faith" that is a "dogmatic definition" and fundamental mark of the

Church, and which constitutes Her "essence and character."

Accordingly, only in the wake of absolute unity in the Orthodox faith can this need be absolutely fulfilled, which admittedly is reckoned to be and is most necessary, above all for contact between the Churches of world Orthodoxy, but also because of the religious and social conditions that prevail throughout today's world.

Hence, it is not enough for the responsible leaders of the Church to address only the need for this unity and rallying; rather, they are obliged to remove completely the causes of the existing division and discord, which they themselves alone created through the "New Calendarist Schism" and the "ecumenist heresy" and the things entailed by them, on account of which the Orthodox *pleroma* of the Church, which undertakes "God-pleasing resistance" on this issue, can never be united and agree with their presiding ecclesiastical authority, which is proceeding in "deviation" and "apostasy," and is thus "publicly erring in piety and righteousness"!

Aside from this indispensable and dogmatically imperative presupposition of the "unity of faith," which dictates the removal of the foregoing factors, which caused the split, every other effort and activity of the ecclesiastical leadership through measures of compulsion and violence, like "expulsions" or other "administrative sanctions" and reprisals, as well as the written Patriarchal injunction to the Holy Monasteries of the Holy Mountain not to register and recognize in the *monachologia* [lists of monks] the novices and monks in independent communities (those, that is, who for the canonical reasons set out above, are unable to continue commemorating their presiding ecclesiastical authority), not only do not bring about "unity of faith," but constitute a manifest "persecution of the Orthodox Faith" and piety, to the detriment of the "unity " and "rallying" of the whole of Orthodoxy that is thus shattered!

Through what we have said on this matter, it is proved that the "unity and rallying" of the Orthodox forces that is so pompously recommended by the ecclesiastical leaders constitutes only a "formal" and "nominal" projection of Orthodoxy, not at all one in essence and practice, according to an "Orthodox understanding" and meaning, and is in no way capable of bringing about an "identity of faith" in the Orthodox *phronema*.

Consequently, these impressive displays of the ecumenists, when judged from reality, testify of themselves that they are put on "to be seen of men" (St. Matthew 23:5), in order to conceal their own ecclesiastical responsibility for the "division," "apostasy" and seduction, clearly, of naïve public opinion.

VI

A WALLING-OFF

This situation, created—though it should not have been—by our presiding ecclesiastical authority and intolerably perpetuated to the detriment of all, brought about, as expected, the division of the ecclesiastical *pleroma* into "Anti-innovationists," abiding steadfastly by the "ecclesiastical exactness [ἀκρίβεια]" and tradition of the Fathers, and the "Innovationists," following the ecumenist heresy and apostasy, both in knowledge and in ignorance, and the "New Calendar schism," totally unconsciously, perhaps, but not without being thus condemned!

On this extremely pressing subject and on the basis of the Church Canons, we affirm that:

Every single one of the so-called "shepherds" of the Church, anyone who, to wit, undertakes the practice of his priestly mission in an anti-Orthodox manner, that is, contrary to the "eternal boundaries which our Fathers have set," the Church condemns as one who errs "in piety and righteousness" and reckons a "false bishop and a false teacher," "a wolf on the attack, wreaking the destruction of the sheep," in breach of the promises he made to God at his episcopal consecration, and lying thus in unforgivable deviation and apostasy, "potentially out of Communion" and therefore canonically "under trial" before a proper, right-teaching Church Synod.

In precisely such an instance, the Church makes known to her faithful *pleroma* the position it must preserve in dealing with its "erring" shepherds, instructing them therein, always foreseeing and having in mind the preservation and maintenance of her Orthodox nature and character—indeed, as much hers as her flock's.

Hence, acting canonically in such an instance, she enjoins that "for her deliverance from divisions and schisms" every one of her faithful *pleroma* "has the right and at the same time the duty, before a Synodal verdict" (and a complete, "actual" condemnation of the erring Bishop) to "set itself apart," that is, to "wall itself off" from him "at once," breaking off all ecclesiastical Communion with and dependence on him, considering one who does this not only "subject to no punishment" but "worthy of

honor and praise" and "truly Orthodox," on account of his obedience to and reverence for this judgment and commandment of the Church (15th canon of the First-Second Synod).

For this reason, this "anti-innovationist" *pleroma*, on the basis of the canonical commandments of the Church and the related Patristic teaching and practice in the matter, in full knowledge of its spiritual rights and duties, has "walled itself off" from its presiding ecclesiastical authority, which "was erring in piety and righteousness," setting itself apart from this authority by fully ceasing the commemoration of his name and, in general, communion with him, setting forth in this way a "God-pleasing Orthodox Resistance," which is a Patristic notion (*Patrologia Graecae* 99:1045,1101) and teaching, commended in particular by St. Theodore the Studite, with regard to "erring" shepherds of the Church.

Such a manifest "fall in faith" (on the part of the aforesaid leaders and Shepherds) as we face today, canonically condemned by the Church, can never be accepted by the "anti-innovationist" *pleroma* of the Church (clergy and laity), because to journey and commune with these fallen leaders would preclude the *pleroma* from preserving and maintaining its Orthodox essence and nature, by which maintenance it intends not to perish with them.

From this, it is proved and attested once more that the people are truly "the guardians of their faith," a people which is truly composed of "the unbending few," the "small flock," the "house church," the "few elect," and indeed of "groups and individuals in huts," to which the Church will eventually be confined on account of apostasy and persecution, as today, in the intelligent judgment of one distinguished Russian theologian, and not in the "deluded multitude," "perishing with heresy and in error," of those who "call themselves godly," but who constitute "the multitude beneath the surface" and the "crowd of the people" (St. Basil the Great, *Epistle 257*)!

* * *

Very Reverend Elders:

The Fathers of the Prophet Elias Skete dutifully did precisely this very thing, and for the above canonical reasons, by breaking

off commemoration of and communion with their presiding ecclesiastical authority (which was "erring in faith," as we said above), by virtue of the "right, and at the same time obligation" ecclesiologically provided to them (see Bishop Nikodim [Milash], *Ecclesiastical Law* [Athens: P. Sakellarios, 1906], p. 400, n. 1). Despite this, however, these Fathers, in the fulfilment of this sacred duty of theirs, and for precisely this reason, were expelled by force, "like animals in transport," from the Holy Monastery of their repentance, the Holy Skete of the Prophet Elias, and from the Holy Mountain in general, completely illegally and forcibly—as in the age of Caligula—, at the initiative of the Patriarchal representatives and with the intervention of the appropriate police and civil authorities of the Holy Mountain, who carried this out, it should be noted, without any proper legal, authoritative, or executive decision on the matter, as we indicated previously!

To wit, one might justly inquire:

If this appalling event of the expulsion or, if you will, "deportation" (appalling since, according to the legal system in force on Mt. Athos, penalties of such a kind are not applied to Orthodox Hagiorites, but are applicable only in the exceptional case of the prohibition of heterodox living there), which took place after an "overstepping" of the Patriarchal "competency," does not constitute, in essence, a destruction, if not an annulment, of the laws and privileges of the Holy Mountain, and especially of its "autonomy" and "self-government," which must abide forever intact, then we ask: What else should the Hagiorite Brotherhood await, in order for them to realize and perceive fully the peril that hangs over their heads for the total destruction of the Hagiorite privileges? Are they perhaps awaiting a future wholesale "occupation" of the Holy Mountain by the Patriarchate in order to be assured of this and to believe it? In that case, however, they will be too late, because they will not be in a position to defend themselves—for, as a result of the above, they have surrendered already—when their turn comes to be expelled and deported! Surely, though, it will not be too late for them to hear the Patriarchal command: "...You do not agree to pray and to liturgize with...Cardinals and Pastors of our 'sister Churches' and to obey and agree with whatever we decide? Get off the Holy Mountain at once!"

And though as assuredly as we do not want such a thing to happen, we nonetheless do not hesitate to believe it, in view of — if nothing else—the evident Athonite inaction in the matter, but chiefly because of the intolerable persistence, even today, of the leadership of the Œcumenical Patriarchate in the heretical Ecumenical Movement and its ideology, to say nothing of the strong influence arising from its absolute captivity, in which this leadership completely, unforgivably lies, to the point, indeed, not only of believing and thinking, but also preaching "in public" (see the interview with the Œcumenical Patriarch in *Kathemerine*, March 15, 1992)—always, I note, on the basis of the foregoing heretical, ecumenist ideology—that "the vision of Christian unity" is an obligation of us all, because this is "the will of the Lord"!

Likewise the following clarification is considered indispensable for the attainment of a complete and unerring understanding of and opinion on this pressing subject:

Those who think that, on the basis of the application to that in question of the standard of "ecclesiastical *oikonomia*," they can overlook and even refuse to respond to the "right and obligation," canonically provided for them, of "walling themselves off," and can continue communing with their ecclesiastical shepherds who "err in piety and righteousness," should seriously take into consideration the following inescapable results—to their detriment and that of the Church—, that is:

This ill-conceived *oikonomia* essentially and practically constitutes a clear "transgression," to the extent that, when applied in the present case, it breaks the canonically-enjoined commandment of the Church concerning "Separation" and "walling off," which in this case is considered indispensably binding for the "rescue of the Church" and the preservation of our Orthodox existence, which is why there is no right provided by canons for the *pleroma* of the faithful to act differently, that is, according to their own judgment and will (15th canon of the First-Second Synod, second part; cf. the interpretation by Bishop Nikodim [Milash], *The Canons of the Orthodox Church with an Interpretation*, vol. 2 [Novi Sad, n.d.], pp. 290-291, in *Orthodoxos Enstasis kai Martyria*, vol. 1, no. 3 [April-June 1986], pp. 73-74).

The inviolable ecclesiastical principle that "*oikonomia* should be practiced where there is no transgression involved," and likewise that "there is no room for compromise in matters of

faith," precludes the right to invoke alleged "*oikonomia*" in the present case, one regarding the continuation of commemoration and communion with the erring Bishops.

The refusal on the part of any knowledgeable clerical or lay theologian to take such salvific and decisive action, that is, a lawful and canonical "walling-off," by virtue of the previously demonstrated canonical and ecclesiological truth, cannot be excused on the grounds that this refusal springs from reasons of mistaken understanding or, because of ignorance, a lack of true and objective information on the saving knowledge and course at issue—aside from cases of wilful perversity, which would, at any rate, indicate a total stifling of the voice of their good conscience!

Such an instance of refusal, rather, brings sin and condemnation on these clerics and laymen, to the detriment of the salvation of their own souls and that of the flock that follows them, because they ignore the canonical commandments and Patristic injunctions concerning "Orthodox resistance" and an "anti-innovationist" course.

This oversight has the canonical consequence that such individuals are deprived of a sure basis for salvation, that is, of the substance of the Faith that is here stake (in that there is no room for "*oikonomia*" or "compromise"), because they have rejected the God-pleasing and practical "candor" and "confession," without which any kind of moral or spiritual virtue of pious content is of no help, insofar as "faith is the thing imperilled" by the evil ecumenist heresy! Because of their communion with it, albeit unwillingly or indirectly undertaken, they reap soul-destroying consequences, on account of this negative course, which makes them totally "perish with heresy" and brings them before the "Gehenna of fire"!

At this point, now, and in view of the foregoing, we would do well to recall the ever-memorable and blessed Hesychast Kallinikos of Katounakia, who, at the time the New Calendarist schism of 1924 was created by the Patriarchal "shepherds," and after breaking off—even at that early time—commemoration of the Patriarch, made this characteristic remark: "Kemal [the "Father" of modern Turkey] is at the head of the Greek Army. Consider the results!" If this blessed Elder, who lived for thirty years as a cloistered Hesychast in the Hagiorite desert of Katounakia, were alive today, he would certainly recommend

"prudent judgment," and not a "perversion" of the exactness of the Church canons, so that everyone—but in particular those who desire the "...harmony of the garden of Kerasia" (see Hieromonk Th., "The Garden of the Orchard of the Panagia, Kerasia, September 1991," in *Protaton*, vol. 2, no. 32 [November-December 1991], pp. 163-166)—might understand that the actual "thorns and weeds" in any garden are comprised of those who do not intend to display an "identity of faith" with the Orthodox *phronema* and course, by reason of their voluntary cooperation with the Antichristian, ecumenist apostasy demonstrated above; but also that "the union of all" does not presuppose "humility and love" as a basic element of its attainment (because it is precisely these things, when turned upside down and deprived of true faith, that then bind together the entire heterodox, heretical mélange of ecumenism), but the indispensable factor of "identity of faith" with the Orthodox *phronema*, which the ecumenists want to overlook, in envisioning their new-style, "non-dogmatic" union!

Besides, the "love of many," which lacks the content of "true faith" and "canonical exactness," is not acceptable to God, if it is not cultivated within the "boundaries which our Fathers set," lacking therein not "a single iota" or even a single dash.

What point would there be, then, even in our attempting to ascend all the rungs of the ladder of the virtues, since the teacher of *The Ladder* advises us that the duty of "obedience" is always in force, *"except,"* however, "in matters of faith," when this dictate does not apply?

The fact that the Church enjoins and recommends a "walling off" as an imperative and indispensable element of her "rescue" from shepherds in error, confirming, in addition to this, that the believer who obeys and complies with this commandment not only is "not liable to any punishment" on the basis of this, but is properly praised, being considered by Her as "truly Orthodox"—of this there is no doubt.

But wholly contrary is the situation of those who demur and resist this positive and objective stand, wilfully refusing to pay respect and obedience to the canonical injunction of walling oneself off, such individuals, whether by reason of their mistaken interpretation and erroneous conviction (as with the inventors and followers of a "conditional" interpretation of this injunction, a theory which has been sufficiently refuted), or because of self-

serving interests, or because they are trying to conceal their own spiritual and canonical lukewarmness or responsibility and guilt in the matter, or because of their clear opposition, for whatever reason, to the canonical *phronema* of the Church, aside from the fact that they are accomplices in "schisms and divisions," because through their communion with them they strengthen and continue them—such individuals willy-nilly come to the point, through this damnable opposition of theirs, of censuring the practice of the Church as deficient, thinking and preaching in this way, finally, to compound their sin, that their obedience to and compliance with this Synodical injunction of a walling-off will place them—listen! listen!—"outside the Church"!!!

Truly, therefore, "Shudder, O Sun, Groan, O Earth" at such obtuseness and perversity, for all who know the truth of the Holy Gospel and believe in it hear from it that "those who walk in darkness know not whither they go" (cf. St. John 12:35), while those who journey in the light and truth of the Church "shall have the light of life" (cf. St. John 8:12)!

These are the inevitable consequences for those who dare in this way to judge and imagine that the practice of the Church is deficient, and that their obedience to and compliance with it will cause them damage and harm! Indeed, to such people the Lord addresses these words: "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (St. John 9:41)!

VII

"CONSERVATIVE" NEW CALENDARISTS

Because of the appalling ecclesiastical situation that prevails today, I judge it useful to set out here the objective commentary below, which pertains to the position and the course which must be followed by those "theoretical" spiritual guides who belong to the party of so-called Church "conservatives," but who only idly protest against this prevailing situation "with words" and "in writing," as well as by those who belong to the ranks of the majority party in the leadership of the Hagiorite Brotherhood, the "Commemorators."

COMMENTARY

With regard to the "canonically imperative" application of the matter of "walling off" the faithful from their "erring" ecclesiastical shepherds (Canon 15 of the First-Second Synod) and the high-handed and erroneous attempt undertaken by the late New Calendarist Archimandrite Epiphanios (Theodoropoulos) to interpret this imperative "conditionally," and concerning the line and course that has to be followed by all of the so-called "conservative" elements, and in particular the "commemorating" cadres of the leaders of the Hagiorite Brotherhood:

In a reference in his *Ecclesiastical Law* of the Orthodox Eastern Church, the author of this book, that wise expositor of the Sacred Canons, the Right Reverend Professor Nikodim (Milash) of blessed memory, Bishop of Zara in Dalmatia, interpreting, on the basis of the Synodical canonical texts, the commandment of the second part of the 15th Canon of the Holy First-Second Synod, which has to do with the "walling off" of the faithful from their ecclesiastical shepherds "who err in piety and righteousness," considers and demonstrates this injunction to be binding, since it constitutes a "right and at the same time an obligation" of the faithful (see: [1] *Ecclesiastical Law, op. cit.*, p. 400, n. 21; [2] *Memorandum-Statement* to Metropolitan Augustinos (Kantiotis) of Florina [Athens: "Agioreiton Pateron" Editions, 1983], pp. 10-12; and [3] *Apostasy and Division* [Athens: Agio-reiton Pateron" Editions, 1981], pp. 36-38).

Other authoritative interpreters of the Church Canons, along with St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite, offer similar opinions on the matter.

Contrary to this, however, Archimandrite Epiphanios (since reposed, defending himself "beyond the grave," without an actual confession and "Orthodox resistance" in candor, because of the damnable responsibility which weighs him down as a result of his cooperation and communion, until his death, with the ecumenist heresy and the "Calendar schism"), through his face-saving and misleading catchwords and sophistries, and in order to conceal this culpable and damnable position of his, did not hesitate to proclaim that the meaning and force of the above canon is "conditional" and not binding and obligatory, that is, that this canon can be put into practice according to the wish, judgment, or the disposition of each person!!!

This high-handed and erroneous interpretation, which is short even on logic, was rejected and refuted canonically, as one might expect, through relevant publications and on the basis of the official and authentic interpretation of the Church as set out above.

However, the distressing side of this damnable activity is that the aforesaid reposed Clergyman was not disposed, either in practice, or much less in his writings and publications, to reaffirm the canonical truth of the Church so fiercely butchered by him, as he ought to have done, out of duty, after the refutation of his erroneous teaching.

The situation of the above clergyman (who in other respects, it should be noted, was honest and blameless, as we know from personal experience), which we have set out objectively—though it is appalling from a confessional point of view and from an anti-innovationist standpoint—, should contribute, we think, to the cessation of the eulogies published about him, which are spiritually harmful for him; instead of eulogies, those who care for his soul would do well to have recourse to invisible, spiritual means of entreating for its forgiveness.

The relevant conclusion in this matter is that: there is not a worse form of folly and a greater stupidity—to the end of captivity by Satan—than for a man within the Church, enjoying full freedom of will from God and knowing his mission on earth, nonetheless, convinced about the rightness of his own judgment,

to delay in taking the opportunity, when he can, like the "wise virgins," use the "remaining time of his life" for the sure attainment of his soul's salvation, to do this—failing to take into consideration that he has no control over even one moment of his life, since "ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (St. Matthew 25:13), with the result that he endangers for sure the salvation of his most precious soul!

This is especially so when it happens in instances where clergy or ministers of the Divine Word who lack the resolve actually to confess "before men" the Orthodox creed consonant with the Church are not disposed—on the basis of their canonical "right and obligation" of "walling off" from them—to "depart from and excommunicate from their midst" their ecclesiastical shepherds "who err in piety and righteousness" "before a Synodical verdict," but, on the contrary, until the end of their lives cooperate and commune with these errant shepherds.

These clergy, whatever their degree and rank, whether they are called "fair-weather conservatives" or "traditionalist Orthodox for form's sake," whether these same happen to be in the leading cadres of the Hagiorite Brotherhood, in every way thought to be and being spiritual guides of the ecclesiastical *pleroma* under them, it follows from this position and stance of theirs that they come under "greater condemnation" (cf. St. James 3;1) than that which weighs down the New Calendarist shepherds of the Church, who by nature and position are conscious and manifest "champions and supporters" of the heresy of ecumenism!

This inference is easily drawn from an objective analysis and comparison of both parties, to the end that: the first group, the "conservatives," through their displays against ecumenism (homilies, articles, writings, extended books, etc.), disavowing and condemning ecumenism as "the worst heresy of the age" and as "frightful syncretism," through this written and oral renunciation alone—without actual "Orthodox resistance"—do nothing more than produce, if not their unforgivable condemnation, an official and, if unwilling, public proclamation *that they follow* this very ecumenist heresy that they disavow and with which they in practice *commune*!!

It is natural that the second group (ecumenists), having lost every trace of Orthodox orientation and foundation concerning the "One, Holy...Church" and being in error by way of the

"branch theory," should believe in and be imprisoned by the heresy and apostasy of ecumenism, forming their unorthodox convictions and a corresponding ecumenist consciousness through their participation in the W.C.C. and their ecclesiastical contact with heterodox heretics. Hence, this situation of theirs allows them "unhesitatingly" to accept, follow, and praise the ecumenist apostasy in the Church as a product of "love," even without Orthodox truth! This assuredly, however, does not mean that these ecumenists, the so-called shepherds of the Church (as the Synodical decrees still call them), are released from their unforgivable culpability and condemnation!

This "greater condemnation," however, is justly and reasonably imputed to the former "conservatives," because in full knowledge of the prevailing ecclesiastical apostasy, they follow and apply "in practice" that which they do not believe, but punitively condemn, stifling in this way the Orthodox voice of their priestly consciences!! Furthermore, they are weighed down by canonical responsibility and culpability because their inconsistent and damnable line and course bring about immeasurable ecclesiastical confusion, spiritual decay, and damage to the souls of the *pleroma* of the faithful, to the extent that they, as much as the ecumenists, cooperating and communing with heresy, but not "walling themselves off" from it, as they should, become deprived of Orthodox substance, insofar as they place themselves "within" the "Innovationist" *pleroma* of the Church, being "potentially" outside of Her (not yet having been judged "in actuality" by "Synodical verdict," as the Patristic assurance in question bears witness: "even if they have not been submerged by their thoughts, nonetheless they are being destroyed by their communion with heresy")!!!

Perhaps, however, after reading the above "Commentary," this question will be posed by those to whom the commentary is addressed: What is the purpose of these things you have written about us? Can it be that we who struggle so much (even for form's sake alone) on behalf of our Holy Orthodox Church are spiritually blind, needing enlightenment and admonition or advice, in order that "our eyes may be opened"?

The truth of the matter and the objective reality respond:

If the position which you have taken in the face of this ecclesiastical situation and the course which you continue to

follow—with the extremely destructive results up to our day, as we said—proceeded from your ignorance, you would have no sin on account of it; or if you had some culpability, you would have it because you had no excuse for ignorance on your part.

Since, however, you write and maintain (it is unclear whether you believe this) that you are journeying in full knowledge and that your struggle is pleasing to God (independently of whether you accept the canonical path suggested by the Church and the Fathers, as we set it out above), rejecting thus other suggestions relevant to this, then "your sin remaineth" (St. John 9:41) and is not forgiven, unless you are willing to remove it through the well known "canonical path," a thing which we whole-heartedly desire and for which we sincerely pray.

Besides, in this regard, it is well known that: Christ's coming into the world "for judgment" is in order "that they which see not might see, and they which see might be made blind" (St. John 9:39). That is to say: Those who are considered by the educated people, "which see" (for example, Hierarchs, Professors, theologians, etc.), to be blind in ignorance and plunged in error, these will see the light of the truth; while those who reckon and present themselves as knowing the truth and the Divine will, and haughtily think that they see, these will be reduced to spiritual blindness! This is why the Saint of the Apocalypse, the Evangelist John, advises: "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Revelation 3:18). The "eyesalve" in question is nothing other than "obedience" and practical "compliance" with the "canonical path" of the Church and the Fathers, which alone of itself offers God-pleasing "confession before men" and the saving testimony of our true Holy Faith, for the spiritual salvation of every "traditionalist" struggler.

What should not remain unrebuked, and this has direct relevance to the subject of the stance of the "conservatives" that is being touched on here, is the serious issue of the result brought about by this stance up to now!

The unbiased scrutiny of every caring and struggling believer, not to mention the bitter fruits and the hitherto negative results of this conservative policy, attest of themselves that the spiritual harm caused to the Church and Her *pleroma* is great and incalculable, since it is not possible to "gather grapes from thorns" and "figs from thistles" (St. Matthew 7:16)!

It is precisely because this stance of theirs is deprived,

through shadowy, sketchy protest and culpable compromise, of canonical and Patristic blessings and Grace, that it is correspondingly deprived not only of a God-pleasing result, but also of good conscience! And in fact: How is it possible for one to cultivate a good conscience of confessional frankness and Patristic struggle, when with disdain for the aforementioned commandments of the Church, he co-operates with the "erring shepherds banished" by Her and when he declines to "hasten"—as "they hastened to rescue the Church"—to deliver the Church from "divisions and schisms," since through his cooperation, instead of "deliverance" from schisms, he strengthens their continuation and is in no way concerned, because of this communion of his, for the security of his "Orthodox being" and that of the Church, seeing that he should in any case know that it is not a trifling matter, but a matter of a most basic "issue of faith" on which depends the spiritual salvation of all the faithful members of the Church of Christ, and to which the lofty mission of the clergymen in question (the "conservatives") and of other competent persons aspires? For if the guardians of the Church betray their great mission and thus "the light be darkness" and "the salt loseth its savour," then, "how great is that darkness?" and "wherewith shall it be salted?" (St. Matthew 6:23; 5:13).

Extremely timely and suitable in this matter is the suggestion of one conservative monk, and indeed not concerning a topic of faith, but in this case a matter of anti-traditionalist ecclesiastical order, who declared thus:

"At times of crisis, after the third 'halt!,' the guard is obliged to open fire, if he does not want to lose his comrades."

With this thought, it appears that the author has grasped the meaning of the "lawful contest" and confession according to God. Can it be, however, that the same man who recommends this will turn out not to open fire even after the third "halt!"? How, then, will he save himself and his comrades? Through a skirmish of continuous "halts!"?

Besides, it is well known that, in the general thought of the canonical and Patristic judgment and teaching, every capitulation to and cooperation and, above all, communion with false belief and heresy constitutes a "denial of faith and spiritual perdition," and that "he who follows a schism"—and much more a heresy—"shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven"!

This system of superficial protests and various other skirmishes constitutes self-deception and betrayal, by reason of guilty consent, which in matters of faith are completely proscribed. Besides, the Church makes clear declarations on the issue. Everyone who has the disposition and will to show obedience and reverence for Her commandments to come to the rescue is saved for sure, while he who is disobedient to them "knoweth not whither he goeth" and is considered to be "as the heathen and the publican" (St. Matthew 18:17)!

* * *

In conclusion, all of us Hagiorites must seriously take into consideration (in view of the fact that the Œcumenical Patriarchate happens to be our "presiding ecclesiastical authority") that:

The Œcumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, for which, as is well known, very holy Fathers of the Church of Christ lamented—this Patriarchate, because of the unfailing words and causes of its deviation and apostasy that we previously developed, has today made itself a center of an anti-Orthodox movement and inspiration, and of manifest heretical, ecumenist thoughts and aims!

Most Reverend body of Elders, if you wish to make this situation known, do so not through written protests, because such protests by the Sacred Community have hitherto proved fruitless and have "waxed worse and worse" (cf. 2 Timothy 3:13); and by reason of "*oikonomia*" and"compromise" your consent up to this point has emboldened our ecclesiastical leaders. This is why you ought, we think, to proceed without reservation any longer to the effective and salvific activity and action of applying the "canonical order" which our Church commands, and about which we have spoken, with a view to "rescuing" Her and you from the ecclesiastical apostasy at issue!

Otherwise, the Holy Mountain, all in all, will cease any longer to fulfil any kind of purpose and mission and, indeed, as a "Bastion of Orthodoxy," this will be to the "greater condemnation" of its unworthy inhabitants!

Would that our Lord might direct your intentions and dispositions and your final judgment, on the basis of them, to His Holy Will. Amen!

VIII

EPILOGUE

As we have explained in the most concise way possible, the apostasy in the sphere of the Church of Christ Militant on earth, previously unheard-of throughout Her life, which is today being accomplished through the "New Calendarist Schism" and the heresy of ecumenism, has not only been proclaimed "in public" since 1920 through the "Encyclical," previously dealt with, of the Church of the Œcumenical Patriarchate, but was founded and spread "world-wide" at the Patriarchate's "initiative," by means of the so-called "World Council of Churches" (W.C.C.), with the ultimate objective not of admitting and receiving the heterodox, heretic members who comprise it into the "One" Orthodox Church of Christ, but instead of this, replacing the Orthodox Church with the planned "World Religion and Church," under the form of the "union of the churches," and this on the basis always of the ecumenist dogma of the "branch theory."

Consequently, it should be noted that this heretical dogma, as we said before, absolutely ignores and completely destroys the "uniqueness" of the Orthodox Church, to the extent that it reckons and counts her as one of the "Christian vines"! On this basis it was determined that the "Dialogues" that are conducted should take place on "equal terms," that is, that the Orthodox should be considered equal to the heterodox, heretical confessions that have no Priesthood and Mysteries!

Products of the acceptance of this heretical definition on the part of the "Orthodox" members of the W.C.C. are the joint prayers and joint celebrations that take place "in good conscience" between Orthodox and heretics, and vice-versa, and notably on the "patronal feasts" that are set forth in an ecumenist spirit, through which the total corrosion and seizure of the Orthodox religious sense and *phronema* of the ecclesiastical shepherds in question becomes unfailingly evident, in the spirit of the ecumenist panheresy, as does their undoubted spiritual captivity!

Assuredly, this consequence is unavoidable, given that none of those who form the "Orthodox" delegations of the W.C.C. have had the courage to reject, as they should have, the establishment

of this heretical dogma, quite simply because they accept and believe it, in practice and theory, in its heretical sense. Acting and thinking in such a way, however, they in any case betray the Orthodox "essence" and "character" of our holy Church, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, such "essence" and "character" as they themselves have.

This predetermined and irrevocable ecumenist line and course of the apostate ecclesiastical leaders described above are demonstrated not only in the principles and fundamentals cited, which this ecumenist policy created and perpetuates, but through recent statements, about which we have spoken, that support and pursue the realization of a "union of the churches," envisioned always according to the spirit of the "Encyclical of 1920": the "non-dogmatic" union, that is, of the heterodox heretics, "communion with whom," it should be noted, "is not excluded by the dogmatic differences existing between them," which is why they are recognized as "reverend sister Churches," "fellow-heirs and members of the promise of God..."—in other words, without any admission of them into the "One...Orthodox Church," in view of the fact that, according to the aforementioned "Encyclical," such a demand by the Orthodox constitutes "claims of old superstitions and habits," which should not be put forward and certainly should be overlooked, since they create "difficulties that thwart the work of union"!

This line and course of ecumenism, however, it should be noted, is the complete antithesis of the "*phronema* of the Church," which it totally adulterates and distorts and which is based on the Gospel commandment, according to which it is determined that:

"The other sheep," "which are not of this fold," that is, those so-called Christians "outside the Church," the heterodox heretics, or even those of other religions—"them also must I bring," says the Lord; that is, they too should be led by the "Good Shepherd" and united with the" sheep of this fold," which "hear His voice," in order that thus "there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (St. John 10:16).

How, then, is it possible for these other sheep to be united with the One Church of the "Good Shepherd," Christ, when they do not want to hear and obey the "voice of the Church" and do not intend to "enter through the door" into the "sheepfold" and be numbered with its faithful *pleroma,* but completely contrary to

this divine commandment, aim to enter "from elsewhere," as "thieves and robbers," refusing, that is, to re-nounce their false belief and heretical error?

In mentioning the foregoing, as much concerning the God-pleasing and canonical return of the heretics to Orthodoxy as concerning the breaking-off of ecclesiastical communion and commemoration with the "erring shepherds," and having in view the previously mentioned passage of St. Maximos the Confessor, we are writing these things, not combatting and hating the heretics, but on the basis of the divine and saving commandment of love, which we are obligated to embrace and offer as much to our like-believing brothers as to all others, even our enemies.

Our love towards the heretics, especially, since it is to be pleasing to God, that is, genuine and beneficial, must aim at their return and liberation from their "deranged opinion," that is, their heresy.

As a result, we should not "rejoice in their hardship," but "rejoice and take delight in their return," in the words of St. Maximos. "For what is more pleasing for the faithful than to behold the scattered children of God being gathered together into one?"

The same holds also for the "erring and apostate shepherds." Towards "their false belief we should be severe and implacable," so as to hate and fight this alone as a product of the Devil, but with a view to their repentance, without hating them personally.

Hence, we should do all things and act "with care" and "scrutiny," for the sake of the commandment of love, always speaking the truth in love, because without truth, love ceases to exist. Besides, how is it possible for love to be sincere, genuine, beneficial and wholly pleasing to God under the ecumenist spirit presupposed by the "dialogues" of the ecumenists?

Consequently, a "non-dogmatic" union with the heretics (as they wish it and not as the Church determines it), without their willing acceptance of the Orthodox truth, is absolutely destructive, as much for them as it is for us, given that they are deprived of truth—and therefore of grace—, while we (as many, we mean, as concur with this anti-Orthodox attitude) are deprived of true and saving love for them and real brotherly concern for their sure salvation!

Precisely this situation of false confession, unacceptable for every genuine Orthodox conscience, has been created by the anti-

Orthodox Patriarchal "Encyclical," which aims at the "non-dogmatic" union of the so-called "Christian Churches," which, as we said before, it considers "reverend sister Churches" and "partakers of redemptive grace"! But this signifies a destruction "in essence and practice" of every Orthodox concept, and also testifies that the contemporary ecclesiastical leaders who proceed on the basis of it have been reduced to aiming at being called Orthodox only formally. For they proceed not alone on the basis of the heretical ecumenist conscience, *phronema*, and way of life already formed in them, practically and indisputably applying this, but they also proceed by their own confession, such, for example, that, for them, he who consistently journeys in Orthodoxy and dutifully boasts for this reason is within the environment (according to this recently invented blasphemy and satanic characterization) of "narcissistic Orthodoxy"!

Comment on this point is certainly quite superfluous, since things speak, here, reasonably well for themselves.

* * *

The necessity of making known this appalling and unacceptable situation leads to the following question, the meaning of which, moreover, provides useful evidence for the further enlightenment of today's Hagiorite Fathers:

Why should the point of departure for this situation be dated from the first appearance of the New Calendarist schism—so very evil and of no benefit whatever—roughly seventy years ago, and why should it continue to our day with this final appearance of ecumenist apostasy?

The answer to this is extremely clear, concrete, and objective: This was to be expected to happen, as an inevitable consequence of the lack of concern on the part of the proper Hagiorite authorities at that time, or of their spiritual indifference, clearly, or ignorance, given that in spite of the disagreements, protests, and dissensions maintained then by certain Fathers, no intention was displayed of God-pleasing resistance to the situation, at its inception, that it might not reach today's sorry state. The lack of such foresight and spiritual consciousness, obligation, and responsibility had as its result the contemporary division of the Hagiorite Brotherhood into "Commemorators," who thus com-

mune with the ecumenist apostasy, and those who form the minority faction of "Non-Commemorators," but who proceed in God-pleasing Orthodox resistance to innovation and stand outside it (independent of the ecclesiologically faulty and erroneous opinions of some, who think that the New Calendarists have been "actually judged" Synodically and that their Mysteries are invalid, something which is "canonically" untenable!).

But allow us to note, in this parenthesis, that all these ecclesiological deviations, provoked by disagreements and divisions, are the fruit and offspring of the canonically inconsistent ecclesiastical line and course of the Hagiorite leadership, which, if it becomes worthy of its mission and rises to the height of its great responsibility and obligation and places itself "actually" outside apostasy, will cause all the divisions automatically to disappear, because there would be no reason to justify their existence, not only with regard to the resistance against the ecumenist apostasy, but also with regard to the canonically deviant line on the pressing subject of "Eucharistic participation," which the "prolific" and "very intelligent" Father Th. created years ago and for which he is responsible and is even now unrepentant, leading the Sacred Community astray—indeed, to the point of publishing a verdict against us (numbered 31/K: 3.3.1970), which, for reasons of canonical, traditional, and historical necessity, should not exist in the Archives of the Sacred Community of the Holy Mountain, since it constitutes a spiritual reproach and censure against its Sacred mission and against the memory and honor of the "Kollyvades" confessors, which is another reason why, albeit even for form's sake, it should be revoked! (See Monk Theodoritos, *Eucharistic Participation on the Holy Mountain* [Athens, 1972], pp. 76-77).

On this point, allow us to express the following opinion:

It is fitting, we think, that in such serious cases of matters of "Faith"—and Faith "in peril," at that—as exist today, that the minority faction of the Hagiorite Brotherhood of the "independent Fathers" (non-commemorators) should be represented, so that in much counsel and understanding and in a spirit of harmony, accord, and love, the outcome that is in accordance with God may always be produced and thus the disagreements, separations, schisms and their consequences, which we have learned always to judge and censure, may be avoided; so that we may feel the obligation to aim at avoiding and neutralizing

divisions in advance, with spiritual discernment and love, even before they happen, in order to preserve the God-pleasing unity and peace of the whole Hagiorite Body, which ought out of duty, in matters of faith, to act in one body and "with one mouth and one heart" to the fulfilment of the lofty mission of our Holy Domain.

We should believe, likewise, that the example of us Hagiorites in "unity of faith," love, and unanimity makes for the most lively spiritual fruitfulness and a vivid example for imitation and for the saving direction of the Orthodox *pleroma* of the Church in general.

Concerning the God-pleasing fulfilment of this lofty duty and in particular applying the "canonical commandment" of "Eucharistic participation" against those who are scandalized at this because of their anti-canonical and damnable persistence in "present-day (bad) habits" and "human traditions," St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite addresses the following advice to us, apart from the countless interpretations and clarifications relevant to the matter in the Sacred *Pedalion*:

"Wherefore, O Christians, be on your guard against accusing others. Above all and especially guard well, my brethren, against getting scandalized and disturbed, when you see or hear how some brother keeps the commandments of the Lord and the Sacred Canons of the holy Apostles, the Œcumenical and local Synods, and the holy Fathers in different places, but above all be eager to imitate him yourselves, praising him as a guardian of the ecclesiastical traditions and the commandments of the Lord, and for the love of God be careful not to accuse such a man with defamatory names, or to harass and persecute him, as perhaps a transgressor of today's habits and human traditions: (1) because in accusing and persecuting him, you accuse and persecute Christ Himself, His Divine Apostles and His Saints, since that brother is suffering and struggling on account of his love for the commandments of Christ and on account of the truth, which was handed down by the Apostles and the Saints; (2) because in accusing and persecuting such a man, you number yourselves among those ancient persecutors of the Saints and the tyrants, but make him to be numbered among those Saints of old who were persecuted, and become deserving of the beatitude of the Lord Who says: 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and

persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake' (St. Matthew 5:11); (3) because as much as you fight and persecute such a guardian of truth and virtue, so much does he overcome you and receive crowns, since he has the truth and the God of truth Himself fighting on his behalf, as it is written: 'Strive for the truth unto death, and the Lord God shall fight for thee' (Wisdom of Sirach 4:28); when the truth is professed by him, although it is warred against, it is never overcome; it always overcomes those who war against it, as the wise Zorobabel says: 'above all things Truth beareth away the victory' (1 Esdras 3:12), and again: 'the truth endureth, and is always strong; it liveth and conquereth for evermore' (1 Esdras 4:38)" (St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite, *Christian Morality*, Part 3, "That One Should not be Scandalized at Those Who Uphold the Commandments and the Sacred Canons" [Thessaloniki: B. Regopoulos, 1974], pp. 258-259).

According to the above, then, the sure salvation of our souls, for one, depends on ourselves, and thereupon whether the Name of God should be "blasphemed" or "glorified among the nations"!

* * *

Very Reverend Elders—Reverend Fathers:

The demonstrably real circumstances and the unfailing testimonies set forth here, which we do not wish to believe will entirely escape your understanding, prove and testify singly, and to the fullest extent, to the apostasy that "by the judgments which the Lord knows" is being accomplished today in the Church by her ecclesiastical leaders and Shepherds.

This situation that was created by these same people, as we said before, is admittedly wretched and unacceptable from every point of view, but especially from the viewpoint of obligatory and God-pleasing opposition on the part of the "highest criterion of the Church," her genuine "Conscience."

To begin with, we must accept that all of this is not granted without the "Will of Divine Providence," and this, according to the Apostolic judgment, in order "that they which are approved may be made manifest" (1 Corinthians 11:19) and "that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (St. Luke 2:35), and that the choices and intentions of shepherds and those whom they

shepherd may be made manifest in general.

About the methods of this opposition, which pertain purely to a "matter of faith" and of sure spiritual salvation, the Church provides pertinent data through her canonical commandments and Patristic teaching, as we have already commented.

In particular this obligation becomes indispensably binding and inevitable for you Holy Elders, by reason of your high calling as the spiritual leadership of the Hagiorite world, making you obligated to, accountable for, and responsible before the Hagiorite Brotherhood in general, not only regarding the governance of the Holy Mountain, but chiefly and especially regarding the preservation of the laws and traditions of our Holy Faith intact and unimpaired, through the "invincible," "anti-innovationist," traditional Orthodox ecclesiastical line and course, far from all heresy, innovation, and error, through which alone the spiritual heritage of our Holy Domain can be preserved, which can shed light in a Pan-Orthodox manner on the entire ecclesiastical *pleroma* outside the Holy Mountain, and show thus in essence and practice that the Holy Mountain is truly the "Beacon" and "Citadel" of Orthodoxy, the "Ark of the Orthodox Faith," and the unique center of God-pleasing life and repentance.

Along these lines, it is needless to stress that the fulfilment of this spiritual duty of the Athonite spiritual leadership, as also the lofty mission in general of the Holy Mountain, is prevented from coming about in the prevailing climate of heretical, ecumenist apostasy, which should be renounced completely and without reservation through the canonical measure of "separation and a walling-off," in a way such that the Holy Mountain will still be able, without divisions and dissensions (which will then vanish completely because there will be no reason for them to exist), in full divine unity of faith according to God, to claim to preserve "an altar free from innovations" and a "pure sacrifice," things which are prevented from being preserved as long as communion and commemoration with the ecumenist heresy and the New Calendarist schism is continued—in any way whatever and for whatever reason—, and this according to the very clear commandment which expressly declares that we should "in no way whatsoever be subject to apostate shepherds."

We duly submit the confirmations mentioned at present in general, and validated by the facts, to your discerning perception and unbiased spiritual judgment, even if, in the case of this

foremost and extremely pressing (as it has been for some years) "matter of Faith," it happens that you have not yet taken the necessary and canonically binding position and decision; and this, impelled by the hope that, by Divine Grace, you will want to be led to the God-pleasing and saving conclusion that you must enroll and number yourselves with the "anti-innovationist" and "God-pleasing resistance" of the Orthodox *pleroma* of the Church (resisting through the canonical measures and means which She provides to her *pleroma* at a time of deviation by Her shepherds), so that in this way you may be able to respond absolutely and surely, as much to the highest duty of saving and preserving your Orthodox "substance," as of preserving the particular "character" of the Hagiorite—and indeed the leading and presiding Athonite Monasteries—, to the glory of our Holy God in Trinity, and the raising of the Hagiorite spiritual prestige, that has been worn to shreds, and its lofty and sacred Pan-Orthodox mission.

Such an action, it should be noted, is urgently required, because contemporary ecclesiastical conditions demand it, if every believer, in good conscience, is to save and preserve his Orthodox "being" and "character," lest he make himself "perish with heresy"!

Finally, the absolutely sure and positive conclusion to be drawn from the above data, or rather the most important of them, concerns the ulterior and fundamental motive of the so-called "World Council of Churches" (W.C.C.).

In our apocalyptic days, as has already been displayed and proved quite clearly, through the establishment of its international "Congresses" (such as the infamy recently brought about in Canberra), the "Council" in question, on the basis of the goals and plans to which it aspires and of the panheresy of Ecumenism preached through its agency, has become a Forerunner of the Antichrist in an absolute sense.

Indeed, on the basis of its actions to date—the obvious ones at least—, but also on the basis of its very goals, no Orthodox Christian should have a place in it, not even as an observer!

Hence, everyone who cooperates with this center of Antichrist, and is in any way involved with the ecumenist heresy, cooperates directly with the precursory instruments of the Antichrist, and, before receiving the perceptible "seal," voluntarily and "consciously" receives the noetic seal of Anti-

christ!

It should be noted, as well, that he who in this way receives the noetic, precursory seal of Antichrist will not be able to escape, thereby, his perceptible seal at his final appearance in person!

This holds good not only for all the members of the W.C.C., founding and otherwise, such as the "delegations of Orthodox Churches" and, in particular, the Œcumenical Patriarchate, but also for everyone who cooperates and, especially, who communes ecclesiastically with them through the ecumenist heresy, becoming thus an initiate of the pan-dogma of the "branch theory" and denying, in this way, his Orthodox essence and receiving invisibly the noetic seal of Antichrist!

Along these lines, it is clear that only through a God-pleasing "resistance" and "frankness" of confession and struggle, which has "great recompense," can we avoid *participating* in the "seal of Antichrist," which our ethereal soul receives whenever it "commemorates" and "communes" with the above members of the W.C.C., the established precursory instruments of the Antichrist, concerning which threat the voice of the Church prophesies that into her own body "shall enter grievous wolves, ... not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29)!

How, besides, is it possible for those who commune with and commemorate errant shepherds (in the face, indeed, of the explicit commandment of the Church about "separation" and a "walling-off" from them) not to be partakers of the inevitable spiritual guilt and canonical condemnation attendant to their destruction by heresy? And how is it possible, likewise, for our Lord thus to hearken to our entreaty and protect His flock "from ruinous wolves" (11th *Eothinon* [Gospel Sticheron from Matins])?

* * *

Very Reverend Elders—Reverend Fathers:

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Romans 13:12).

All who are in this "condemned" condition, if they desire not to repeat, like the "foolish virgins," the words, "Lord, Lord, open to us" (St. Matthew 25:11), and not to hear the dread response of

the Bridegroom Christ, "I know you not," let them reflect *seriously* on the foregoing, so that, before the most precious "remaining time of their life" is used up, they may hasten "at once" through Orthodox "resistance" and God-pleasing "confession" to number themselves—and every well-intentioned believer with them—among the "Anti-Innovationist *Pleroma*" of the Church, in order to enter with "the wise virgins into the marriage" before "the door is shut" (cf. St. Matthew 25:1-13).

This truth, however, presupposes that we are all *ever* obligated to abandon "the erring multitude," which "is rewarded by flattery and gifts..., which fell by cowardice and fear, preferring the temporal enjoyment of sin to eternal life." Let us "pay no heed to the multitude of the so-called God-fearing, but heed those who are *genuinely* God-fearing, even if only one be saved from among them." For, if the multitude, or "those who define the Church by the multitude...," are not Orthodox in resistance to innovation, "let the crowd of the people never affect us." Especially in difficult circumstances, as in the contemporary atmosphere of ecclesiastical confusion and apostasy, when the "unbending are few in number" and when "one [true-believing] man on his own—albeit a man more necessary and precious than the whole world—is worth ten thousand [errant in belief]," then "one [true-beliving] man and the truth constitute the majority."

Would that we might be reckoned "with the few" and the "little flock," and prefer always "to the multitude beneath the surface, the saving Ark of Noah."

In the light of all of the evidence cited above, we should like to hope that you will duly and eagerly do honor to yourselves and will desire, in your administrative and spiritual capacity, first, to neutralize the anti-evangelical and anti-monastic measures of "persecution for the Faith" (even, perchance, such as are planned for the future) totally illegally and uncanonically taken against our "resisting" Orthodox brethren in Christ of the Holy Skete of the Prophet Elias, since these measures happen to be invalid in "form" and "essence" and are as if they had never taken place, and dismiss from the Skete those spiritual "adulterers" who occupied it without any legal right, restoring to it the Prophet Elias Fathers who are its lawful inhabitants by "divine right;" and secondly, that, through your God-pleasing and saving decision you will expunge completely the ecclesias-

tical division of the Hagiorite Brotherhood that has been maintained for seventy years by virtue of the "unity of Faith" that was taken from it, so that "with one mouth and one heart" we may glorify the All-holy Name of our Lord and that of our Patroness, the Most Holy Theotokos, for the raising of the spiritual prestige of the Holy Mountain, that is, again, worn to shreds, for the glory of God and the sure salvation of all our souls,

...in which we remain, appealing to your saving enlightenment in this matter,

With good expectations and due honor:
on behalf of the "anti-innovationist" Orthodox
ecclesiastical *pleroma* "in resistance,"

Hieromonk Maximos
and Monk Basil,

Sacred Hesychasterion of St. Basil
Holy Mountain of Athos
630 87 Daphne, Greece
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